

Commissioner's Office 241-2610  
Legal Division 241-2602  
Division of Mental Health 241-2604 (Voice/TDD)



Vermont State Hospital 241-1000  
Division of Mental Retardation 241-2614  
Fax Number 241-3052

**State of Vermont**  
**Agency of Human Services**  
**Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation**  
103 South Main Street  
Waterbury, Vermont 05671-1601

MEMORANDUM

TO: Vermont Adult Performance Indicator Project Advisory Group

FROM: John Pandiani  
*Andy* Andrew Zovistoski

DATE: April 30, 1997

RE: Prevalence of Serious Mental Illness and Access to Services

The attached is the second in our series of reports on access to Adult Mental Health services in Vermont.

We look forward to your comments on the quality of the data, the appropriateness of the analysis, and the effectiveness of the presentation of these data, as well as your interpretation of the results.



**Access to Mental Health Services**  
**Part II**  
**Prevalence and Access**

**Question:** Does the prevalence of serious mental illness and the relative access to publicly funded adult mental health services vary across community mental health regions in Vermont?

**Data:** County level estimates of the prevalence of serious mental illness are based on procedures developed by Kessler et al.<sup>1</sup> (1996). Kessler's estimates are based on US census data and use demographic, economic, and other social factors to derive estimates of the prevalence of serious mental illness on both the census tract and county level. However, this estimating procedure does not consider unique local factors such as patterns of deinstitutionalization.

Information on the number of clients served by CRT programs and by the overall adult mental health component of community mental health centers (including CRT, Adult Mental Health Outpatient, and Emergency Services programs) were obtained from Quarterly Service Reports submitted by Community Mental Health Centers to Department of Developmental and Mental Health Services.

**Analysis:** Prevalence rates for community mental health catchment areas are extrapolated from Kessler's county level prevalence estimates to community mental health catchment areas. Access ratios are the number of people served as a proportion of the estimated number of residents of each catchment area who have a serious mental illness.

**Results:** There is little variation in estimates of the prevalence of serious mental illnesses among most of Vermont's community mental health service areas. Seven of the ten catchment areas have prevalence estimates in the 5.1% to 5.6% range. The estimated prevalence of serious mental illness exceeds 6% in only one region (Chittenden, 6.9%).

There is substantial variation in the overall adult mental health access ratios for Vermont's community mental health service areas. At the high end of the scale, the greatest access ratios for the overall adult mental health service component were found for Bennington and Washington counties, where 60% and 57% of the estimated number of people with serious mental illness were served respectively. At the lower end of the scale, the access ratios for the overall adult mental health service components in Orange and Chittenden counties were 30% and 34% respectively.

There is also substantial variation in the access ratios for CRT programs at Vermont's community mental health service areas. The CRT program in Washington County had the highest access ratio, serving 26% of the estimated number of people with serious mental illness who were residing in its service area during FY1996 and the Northeast region had the second highest access ratio (20%). The CRT programs in Orange and Chittenden Counties had the lowest access ratios (8% and 9% respectively).

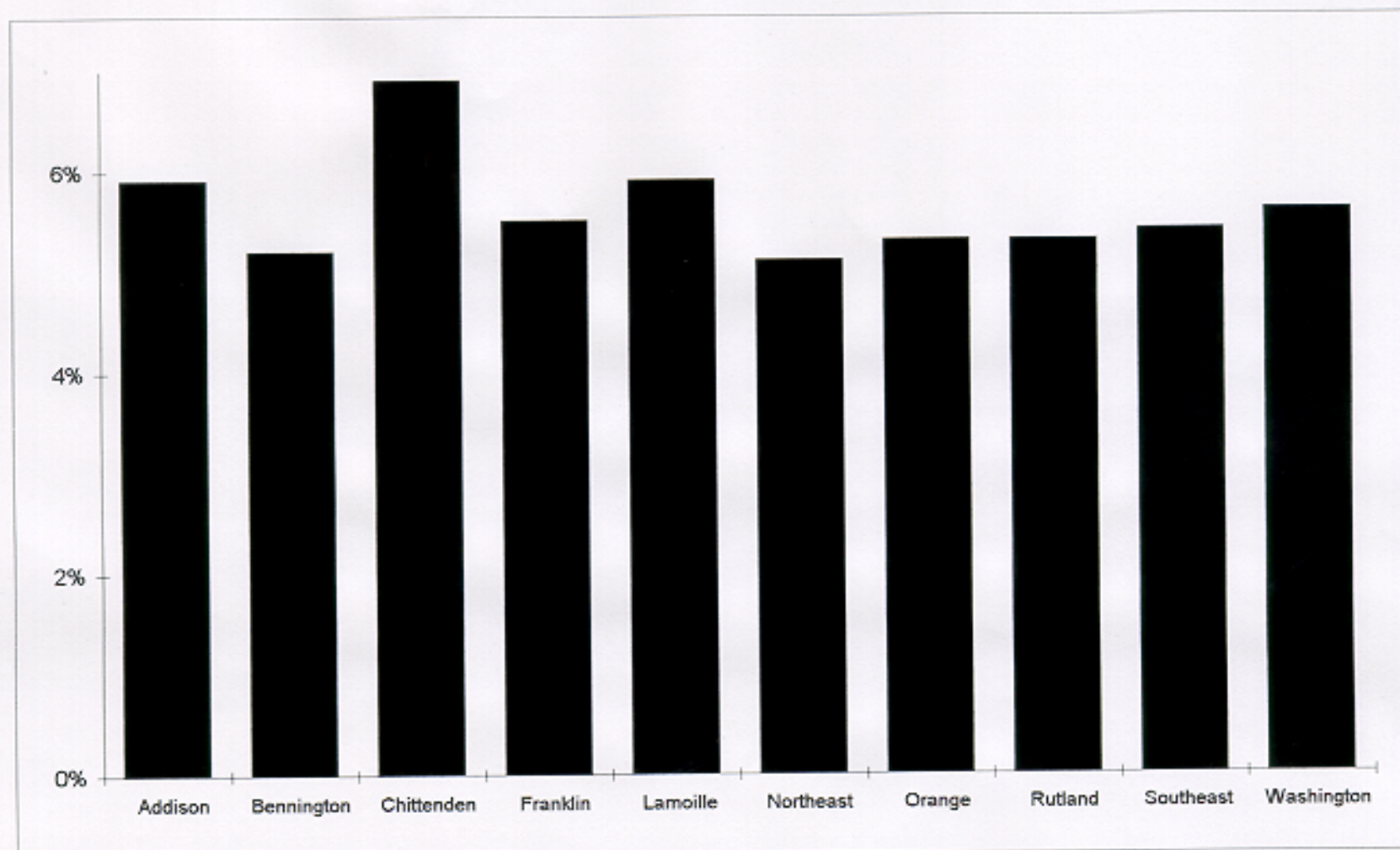
---

<sup>1</sup>Kessler, R.C., et al. *Estimation of the 12-month Prevalence of Serious Mental Illness*. (1996). Unpublished document. Estimates of the number of adults 18 years of age and older who, at any time during a given year, had a diagnosable mental, behavioral, or emotional disorder that met the criteria of DSM-III-R and that resulted in functional impairment which substantially interfered with or limited one or more major life activities. Substance abuse disorders, and developmental disorders excluded from this definition.



# Prevalence Estimates

## People with Serious Mental Illness by Vermont Catchment Area, 1996



Catchment Area		Total Population <sup>1</sup>	Prevalence	
			S.M.I. Rate <sup>2</sup>	People with S.M.I. <sup>3</sup>
Addison	- CSAC	24,730	5.9%	1,459
Bennington	- UCS	27,359	5.2%	1,423
Chittenden	- HCHS	109,448	6.9%	7,552
Franklin	- FGI	35,664	5.5%	1,962
Lamoille	- LCMHS	16,399	5.9%	968
Northeast	- NEK	44,731	5.1%	2,281
Orange	- CMC	25,548	5.3%	1,354
Rutland	- RACS	47,570	5.3%	2,521
Southeast	- HCRSSV	68,282	5.4%	3,687
Washington	- WCMHS	42,804	5.6%	2,397

<sup>1</sup> 1996 Vermont adult population estimates from the Department of Health

<sup>2</sup> Estimates of the number of people with serious mental illness (S.M.I.) based on prevalence estimates from Kessler et al. (1996).

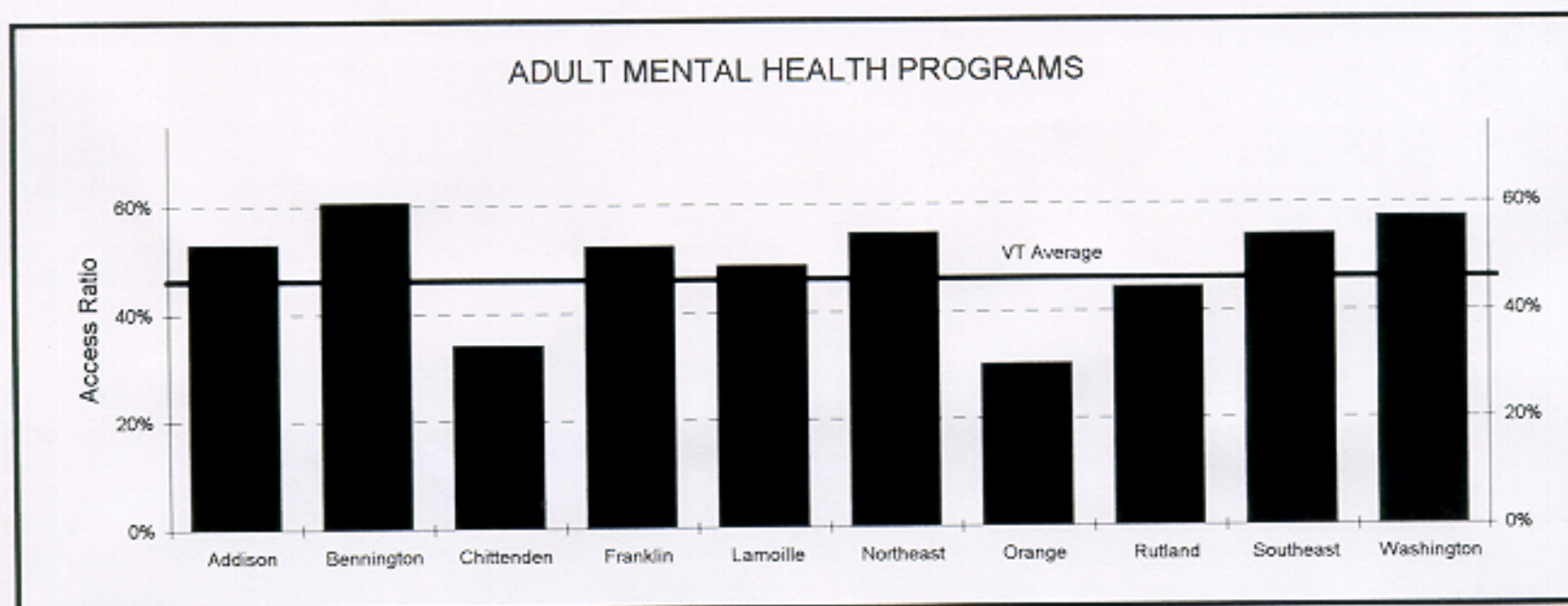
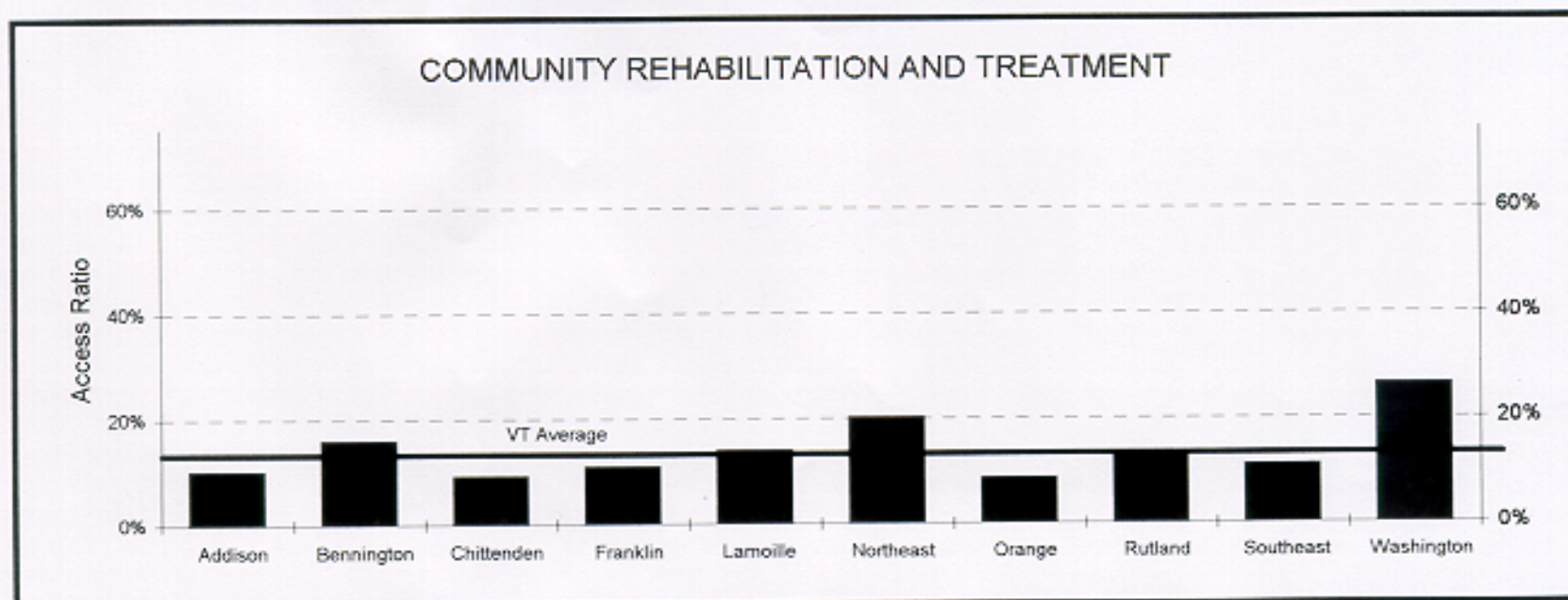
<sup>3</sup> (S.M.I. rate) X (total population).

Catchment level estimates calculated using weighted county level estimates.



# OVERVIEW OF ADULT MENTAL HEALTH PROGRAMS

## ACCESS RATIOS, FY1996



Region/Provider	Population <sup>1</sup>	Prevalence <sup>2</sup>		People Served <sup>3</sup>		Access Ratios <sup>4</sup>	
		Percent	Number	CRT	Total Adult Mental Health	CRT	Total Adult Mental Health
Addison - CSAC	24,730	5.9%	1,459	146	770	10.0%	52.8%
Bennington - UCS	27,359	5.2%	1,423	225	860	15.8%	60.4%
Chittenden - HCHS	109,448	6.9%	7,552	673	2,562	8.9%	33.9%
Franklin - FGI	35,664	5.5%	1,962	210	1,024	10.7%	52.2%
Lamoille - LCMHS	16,399	5.9%	968	133	469	13.7%	48.5%
Northeast - NEK	44,731	5.1%	2,281	455	1,242	19.9%	54.4%
Orange - CMC	25,548	5.3%	1,354	114	406	8.4%	30.0%
Rutland - RACS	47,570	5.3%	2,521	316	1,115	12.5%	44.2%
Southeast - HCRSSV	68,282	5.4%	3,687	402	1,987	10.9%	53.9%
Washington - WCMHS	42,804	5.6%	2,397	627	1,371	26.2%	57.2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>442,535</b>	<b>5.8%</b>	<b>25,603</b>	<b>3,301</b>	<b>11,806</b>	<b>12.9%</b>	<b>46.1%</b>

<sup>1</sup> 1996 Vermont adult population estimates from the Department of Health.

<sup>2</sup> Estimates of the number of people with serious mental illness (S.M.I.) based on prevalence estimates from Kessler et al. (1996).

<sup>3</sup> Number of people served are based on quarterly service reports submitted by Vermont's community service providers and include people assigned to CRT programs. Adult Mental Health Programs include Adult Outpatient, CRT, and Emergency Services Programs.

<sup>4</sup> Access ratio calculated by dividing the number of people served by the number of people in need (prevalence).